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National Security and Foreign Affairs Subcommittee

Congressman John Tierney, Chairman

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Chairman Tierney and Colleagues Comment on GAO's Report on Efforts to Improve Interagency Collaboration and Strengthen National Security as well as the Skelton-Davis Reform Effort

Washington, DC – Today, Congressman John F. Tierney, Chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, joined several House and Senate colleagues in responding to the release of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, "An Overview of Professional Development Activities Intended to Improve Interagency Collaboration":

"I am pleased to receive this report, which identifies and describes interagency professional development opportunities for those at our government agencies charged with ensuring our national security. I commissioned this report because I believe it is important for Congress and others to understand what programs are in place to prepare the government to work together to promote U.S. security interests. During my time as Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, I have repeatedly seen limitations on the agencies' ability to communicate effectively with each other, and I have grown increasingly concerned about the agencies' capacity to collaborate.

"The GAO report is an important step toward understanding the current status of our interagency training apparatus. But it also underscores the need for a more formal, systematic approach to interagency training. The threats that face our country today are complex and dynamic. Keeping our country safe requires the combined expertise of a wide range of government agencies. The GAO report confirms that we are not adequately preparing our national security professionals to harness the full force of the U.S. government to protect the homeland," said Chairman Tierney.

"Our biggest homeland and national security challenges require the coordinated resources of many different agencies," said Senator Daniel K. Akaka, Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management and the Federal Workforce. "The GAO review highlights successes and challenges in interagency professional development and collaboration. We must give federal employees the skills they need to unify their agencies in this important effort."

On Wednesday, Tierney also announced his support for the Skelton-Davis Interagency National Security Professional Education, Administration, and Development System Act of 2010 (H.R. 6249). This legislation will strengthen the U.S. government by better preparing our national security professionals to work outside their home agencies. This forward-looking bill is an important first step toward shifting agencies' culture and skills to be better prepared for tomorrow's threats and Tierney intends to work in the 112th Congress to ensure that this bill gets the attention it deserves.

"I want to thank Chairman Tierney for requesting this important GAO study and for cosponsoring the interagency reform legislation Congressman Geoff Davis and I introduced last fall. Fixing our inefficient and ineffective interagency system is critical to U.S. national security, and Congress must lead the way. We can take the first step by providing our national security professionals the interagency training, education, and career opportunities they need to recognize and execute whole-of-government solutions to national security challenges," said Congressman Ike Skelton (MO-04), Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

"I am pleased that Chairman John Tierney commissioned this important GAO study. Additionally I am very grateful for his cosponsorship of national security reform legislation I introduced with Chairman Ike Skelton. This legislation would, for the first time, statutorily mandate a professional development system for interagency national security professionals across the federal government. I look forward to working with John in the challenging days ahead as, together, we work to reform the national security interagency process," said Congressman Geoff Davis (KY-04).

A copy of the GAO report is available [HERE](#) .